

# ENCORE

FALL/WINTER 2022



WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC



YOUR NEXT GREAT

# ADVENTURE



**W**  
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**University**  
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[wiu.edu/music](http://wiu.edu/music)

## AUDITION DAYS

Saturday, December 10  
Saturday, January 14  
Saturday, February 4  
Monday, February 20  
Saturday, April 8

## DISCOVERY DAYS

EXPLORE LIFE AS A MUSIC MAJOR

Friday, October 28  
Friday, April 21

## DEGREE PROGRAMS

### Undergraduate

Composition  
Jazz Studies  
Music Business  
Music Education  
Music Therapy  
Performance

### Graduate

Composition  
Conducting  
Jazz Studies  
Music Education  
Music Therapy  
Musicology  
Performance  
Piano Pedagogy



# From the Director



**Greetings from the School of Music at Western Illinois University.** The Fall 2022 semester was pivotal as we restored a relatively normal educational environment after more than two years of pandemic restrictions and launched construction on the Center for Performing Arts, a \$119 million project that has been decades in the making. If you have not been on campus recently, you are in for a surprise! For highlights of the groundbreaking ceremony with Governor Pritzker and the latest updates regarding the CPA, please visit [wiu.edu/cpa](http://wiu.edu/cpa).

The School of Music hosted several festivals and special events in the fall semester that welcomed thousands of people to WIU. Over 3500 prospective students, parents, and community members attended the Marching Band Classic in October. WIU hosted the ILMEA District IV Festival in November, which attracted approximately 900 talented students participating in elementary, junior, and senior ensembles. The Community Music School continued to experience tremendous growth and is expanding course offerings each semester. Other highlights included the Holiday Festival of Choirs, numerous faculty and student performances and presentations in COFAC Recital Hall, and much more.

Beyond our campus, our faculty and students have been busy presenting and performing in regional, national, and international venues. Of special note, eight WIU professors performed two works by James Stephenson under the direction of Dr. Mike Fansler at the Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra Conference in Chicago. Each year the conference welcomes 18,000 attendees from all 50 states and more than 30 foreign countries.

We are excited to share our many achievements with you and invite you to connect with us through social media for the latest news. Best wishes for a happy and healthy spring season.



**DR. JEFFREY BROWN**  
Director, WIU School of Music



<b>ALUMNI NEWS . . . . .</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>RETIREMENT . . . . .</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>FACULTY NEWS . . . . .</b>	<b>13</b>

**ON THE COVER:** Left to right: Dean Billy Clow, Governor J.B. Pritzker, President Guiyou Huang, and School of Music student Dante Patterson pose at the CPA Groundbreaking Ceremony.

PHOTOGRAPH BY WIU VPC





# GROUNDBREAKING NEWS

## WIU breaks ground on the Center for Performing Arts

Western Illinois University held a groundbreaking ceremony for its new Center for Performing Arts (CPA) on October 7, 2022. Governor J.B. Pritzker, President Guiyou Huang, College of Fine Arts and Communication Dean Billy Clow, and other dignitaries attended the ceremony on the Macomb campus.

The construction of the CPA is funded by Governor Pritzker's "Rebuild Illinois" capital plan. Estimated construction costs near \$110 million and will produce a 100,000 square foot building. The CPA will include academic spaces, offices, practice rooms, teaching studios, and two large performance spaces. Dr. Brown, Director of the School of Music, was asked about the CPA.

### **What excites you most about the construction of the CPA?**

The Great Hall! The beautiful 875-seat proscenium theatre will significantly expand the creative opportunities for our talented students and faculty. We have been fortunate with COFAC Recital Hall as our primary performance space for the last twenty years, and its warmth and intimacy are ideal for

recitals and chamber music performances. The acoustics of the proscenium theatre will transform our large ensemble performances and will open up new possibilities for guest artists and other special events.

### **How will the CPA affect Western? The greater Macomb community?**



▲ DANTE PATTERSON, MUSIC EDUCATION '24



As the first state-funded building on campus in several decades, the CPA is a great sign of progress for WIU and a symbol of the importance of the arts on our campus. It will enrich the educational experience for our students through state-of-the-art rehearsal and performance spaces and offer a diverse array of events for everyone on campus. The School of Music and the other departments of the College of Fine Arts and Communication serve as a cultural center for WIU, the Macomb community, and the region, and the CPA will broaden our impact.

#### **What are your hopes for performances and collaborations in the CPA?**

The School of Music and the Department of Theatre and Dance will present a full schedule of performances, and we also hope to feature touring productions and other special events throughout the year. The CPA presents an incredible opportunity to develop new artistic collaborations with other

departments, community organizations, and beyond. Stay tuned! One thing is certain: it will be a busy place when the doors open in less than 2 years.

About the progress of the CPA and its future, Billy Clow, Dean of COFAC, adds:

"I think the semester of first events needs to be big and bold. We need to showcase what we can do in this space. It needs to be collaborative, between the college and the region. I have my ideas for initial bookings, but I look forward to hearing where we would like to go as a group. I'm excited about it.

For those interested in supporting the project, there are donation opportunities available. An integral part of the project includes progress toward becoming an All Steinway school, ensuring every piano in School of Music spaces is a Steinway. Additionally, there are naming opportunities for those interested in honoring legacies within the CPA.

For more information about the development of the project, please visit [wiu.edu/cofac/cpa](http://wiu.edu/cofac/cpa).

To learn more about donation opportunities, please contact COFAC Dean Billy Clow at [wt-clow@wiu.edu](mailto:wt-clow@wiu.edu). ■

**"The CPA is a great sign of progress for WIU and a symbol of the importance of the arts on our campus. It will enrich the educational experience for our students through state-of-the-art rehearsal and performance spaces and offer a diverse array of events for everyone on campus."**

**DR. JEFFREY BROWN**

DIRECTOR  
WIU SCHOOL OF MUSIC

CONCEPTUAL RENDERING, CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS







# THE PAST MEETS THE PRESENT

WIU Bands partner with Jim Stephenson to perform another Stravinsky companion piece

**By Anneliese Land**

Several School of Music faculty members performed at the 76th Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic on The performance took place on December 21 in Chicago. The Midwest Clinic International Band, Orchestra and Music Conference offers guests interested in music education an array of clinics and exhibits, as well as access to music and teaching icons. With more than 18,000 attendees from all 50 states and more than 40 countries, The Midwest Clinic offers all attending musicians an unmatched networking opportunity.

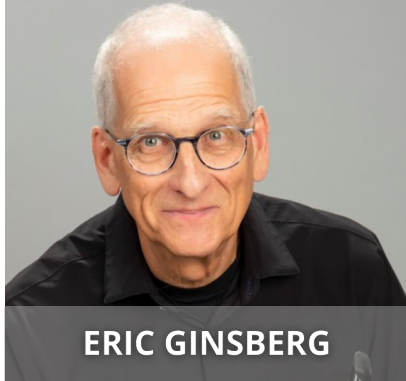
Dr. Mike Fansler, Director of Bands, commissioned composer Jim Stephenson to create companion pieces to Igor Stravinsky's "L'Histoire du Soldat" and "Octet." Stephenson accepted creating "The Devil's Tale" and his own "Octet," employing the exact instrumentation and strategic compositional "nods" to Stravinsky's originals. During the session, Stephenson explained his pieces and the WIU Faculty Chamber Players presented performances of the newer companion pieces.

"The Devil's Tale" is a palindrome of Stravinsky's original work, with every title a palindrome itself, the form loosely in reverse, and a similar instrumentation. A similar intent drove the composition of Stephenson's "Octet," embedding nods to Stravinsky through motivic material, texture, and again, the unique instrumentation of the octet itself.





JOHN MINDEMAN



ERIC GINSBERG



KATIE WOLFE



MATT BEAN



MATT HUGHES



SHAWN SEGUIN



SUYEON KO



BRUCE BRINEY



KEVIN NICHOLS



MATT ONSTEAD



THOMAS STARK



CARL GARDNER

▲ PERFORMERS AT THE 76TH MIDWEST CLINIC PRESENTATION

"There are things embedded in the piece that one wouldn't know unless they knew Stravinsky. It's very cleverly written and virtuosic just like the Stravinsky original. It's a brilliant work," adds Dr. Fansler.

The presentation at the Midwest Clinic included an interactive

slide presentation and packet entitled "Musical Companions," compiled by WIU Bands graduate assistant Morgan Miller.

These materials include specific excerpts of Stephenson's compositional nods to Stravinsky, as well as explanations from the composer himself regarding his

musical choices, sources, and inspirations for both Stravinsky companion pieces.

Original recordings of "The Devil's Tale" and "Octet" by the Western Illinois University faculty chamber players are available on all major streaming platforms. ■



**"There are things embedded in the piece that one wouldn't know unless they knew Stravinsky. It's very cleverly written and virtuosic just like the Stravinsky original. It's a brilliant work."**

▲ DR. MIKE FANSLER



# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: MINERVA DIAZ

By Anneliese Land





## What was your musical life like before you came to Western?

I sang in an after school choir in elementary school until I could join band in fourth or fifth grade. I started on saxophone through middle school, then switched to trombone in high school. We had pull out, 30 minute private lessons twice a month. I was in band and choir throughout high school, and then played in orchestra as well in my senior year of high school.

## What did you gain as a result of working with students and faculty at Western?

Real-life solutions for real-life struggles I may encounter in the classroom. For example, many professors, such as Dr. Cangro or Dr. Nichols made it a point to provide us with resources on how to troubleshoot common problems a student might encounter when first learning their instrument(s), or how to make cost effective repairs.

Being able to have such intimate classroom settings helped me a lot. I like that our studio was a size that allowed for more one-on-one learning. Professor Mindeman emphasized the mindful practice philosophy and how intentionality in how we practice greatly impacts how we might ultimately perform. Simultaneously, it was ingrained in me that if you don't practice your part and you're unprepared, that's on you. Both these approaches should be examined by any musician.

I enjoyed working with faculty members who truly challenged my perspective; for any class I had with Dr. Hardeman, I was so grateful. I appreciated how her classes expanded my knowledge of music and how music is connected to history, as well as how they challenged how I listen to and interpret things. Although not expected, the exposure to New Music or what is considered avant garde opened my mind to how I perceived music both as a listener and player. Prior to Western, I honestly had not heard about "new music" other than Steve Reich and his piece 4'33". The New Music Festival offered an interesting opportunity to hear what composition majors were working on, as well as hearing from currently active composers on their approach and what attracted them to work within the genre. It altered my perception of what is considered "good music" and why we uphold certain composers or types of music versus another.

The opportunities I had to explore differentiations and accommodations in lesson planning throughout my Music Ed degree were impactful: "How many different ways can I explain this to any student?" If we believe music is for all, then we need to believe that just because a student might have an exceptionality doesn't mean they can't accomplish the lesson goal.

Lastly, I gained the ability to explore different ensemble experiences and interests that I might not have had the opportunity to do otherwise. Despite not being a jazz or vocal major, I was given the opportunity and assistance to explore the genre both on my instrument and on voice. At some point, I was also allowed to continue voice lessons and even participate in the choirs at Western. It truly brought me joy to have the opportunity to continue exploring these interests despite it all. Those experiences have enriched how I continue to perceive and teach music greatly.

## What are your responsibilities in your current position?

Currently, I teach in both buildings every day teaching multiple classes of Symphonic Band and Pre-AP Beginning Band and Percussion. Additionally, I co-direct the athletic bands (pep band and marching band) as well as the competitive marching band with my colleague Michael Bielecki (WIU alum!). Our approach to the program is ultimately student centered and we work to meet students where they are.



Generally, students come into our high school program with no prior playing experience. Many of our students may have been enrolled a year before, but I began teaching in D206 a year after COVID quarantining and shut downs. Needless to say, it has been amazing to see how far students have come since we first rehearsed together in Fall of 2021.

In addition to Beginning Band, Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble, we offer courses in AP Music Theory and most recently, Music Industry. This year, our fine arts department has actively collaborated on curriculum writing for a two credit Arts and Music Appreciation course. Our goal is to connect the visual art and music art forms while also exploring how they are received and interpreted, both in the past and present world. Next year I anticipate teaching one or more of these courses in addition to my current class load.

## **What have been your biggest success so far in your program?**

Our program grew by about 70 students last year, so we are currently in the struggle of finding enough instruments for the students. We have expanded performance opportunities: we are going to have a select group of students perform at the Illinois Philharmonic's spring concert, thanks to connections I made with Catie Hickey and Lindsay Frederickson that I made while at school at Western. It is our goal to give our students opportunity to perform in spaces to which they may be less accustomed. We're working a lot to ensure that we're meeting every student where they are, because if they're willing to put in the work, we want them here.

## **What advice do you have for our current students?**

Don't worry about what people are doing in their practice room - you need to focus on where you are and how you're going to get better. From my personal experience, I got bogged down sometimes wondering what others were doing versus honestly assessing my own growth.

Even if you think you're going to move back to where you lived to teach, put yourself in spaces that are less comfortable for you because you are going to teach all kinds of people. You are going to teach all kinds of humans - whether it's teaching swimming or working the summer music camp, put yourself in any space that will allow you to practice working with other people. At the end of the day, yes, you need to know your content, but you are working with little humans who have a lot of feelings.

In terms of academic and musical success, make sure you ask questions about instruments you don't understand. Please play in University Band in the spring - especially if you can play percussion! Learn as much as you can.

Stay true to what you want, and focus on your weaknesses. It's hard to do, but you need to get over the fear and pursue growth.

## **Where do you see yourself in five or ten years from now?**

I see myself continuing to teach high school and continuing to become more involved at the state level. I have discovered that we are not very involved in ILMEA and I wondered, "why is that?" So, directly with my students as well as through the leverage of the state's resources and information, I want to bring as much of the world as possible to all of our students.

Other than that, I hope still playing my horn. Thanks to some of the connections I made and opportunities I had at Western, I'm still playing. Even though I wasn't a big jazz player, I got to play in combos and big band. Still now, I get to play and sometimes get paid to do it, which is really cool. If you want to make the time for it, you can still teach and perform. You don't have to lose one or the other. And, you never know how the connections you make in school will impact your life forever.



# ALUMNI NEWS



**Beth Grzeszczak Nee Cheney** (BM, '10, Music Therapy) welcomed the birth of her second son, Owen Lee Grzeszczak on May 17, 2022.



After earning 3 Salesforce certifications, **Christy Warren** (BA, '97, Music Business) started a new position as a Salesforce Administrator for a SaaS company supporting live events, so while her role has shifted firmly into technology, her work is still closely aligned with her passion of live events and the arts.



**Brenda (Scholer) Papierniak**, PsyD (BA, '95, Music Therapy) co-authored a chapter in the book "Behavioral Health Services with High-Risk Infants and Families: Meeting the Needs of Patients, Families, and Providers in Fetal, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and Neonatal Follow-Up Settings Behavioral Health Services with High-Risk Infants and Families: Meeting the Needs of Patients, Families, and Providers in Fetal, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and Neonatal Follow-Up Settings" (Aug 2022). She currently works at Ascension Saint Alexius, Hoffman Estates, IL where she coordinates services in the Perinatal and Pediatric Health Psychology program and provides clinical supervision to pre-doctoral clinical interns.

Dr. Papierniak and her husband Scott Papierniak (1993) just had their oldest son graduate from the University of Louisville in Dec 2022 with a degree in Jazz Performance.



After retiring from McKinney (TX) Boyd High School as head orchestra director in 2021, **Michael Link** (BA, '86, Percussion/Music Education) continues to teach in the music education department at the University of North Texas (Denton). In addition he continues to serve as Director of Music and Worship at Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Carrollton, Texas.



**Laura Werry-Myers**, MA, MT-BC (BA, '00, Music Therapy) received the 2022 Benedictine Spirit Award for Internal Community Focus from the Benedictine Living Corporation. Laura was selected from over 30 Benedictine Living communities for her work on the annual resident Christmas concert at Nazareth Living Center in St. Louis for the past 11 years, and for safely continuing the tradition through the COVID-19 pandemic. The concert features multiple vocal and instrumental ensembles as well as soloists from all levels of care at the community (Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care, and Long-Term Skilled Nursing). ■

## PROFESSOR OF TRUMPET

# BRUCE BRINEY

Retiring from the WIU School of Music after 30 years of service

Dr. Bruce Briney, Professor of Trumpet at WIU, will be retiring following the conclusion of the Spring 2023 semester after 30 years of teaching.

### **When did you start at WIU?**

I auditioned at Western in June of 1993 for a one-year position and was offered the job. I maintained some of my performing commitments in Chicago and commuted weekly from Evanston. A search for the tenure track trumpet position opened in the spring semester of 1994 and I reapplied, auditioned again and secured the fulltime spot. Robin and I moved to Macomb permanently in the summer of 1994. That year, I was fortunate to start working at WIU, the Quad Cities Symphony and the Peninsula Music Festival. 1994 was a remarkable year of dramatic change for the Brineys!

### **What are some musical opportunities you have had outside of applied trumpet and the quintet?**

Western has always been supportive of my creative pursuits beyond my primary assignment as a studio trumpet teacher. In the classroom, I've taught conducting, brass techniques and chamber music. As a conductor, I've had wonderful opportunities to lead the University Symphony Orchestra, cover a sabbatical leave with the Symphonic Wind Ensemble and conduct the opera. I never thought I'd find a job where I could explore all of these musical passions and feel fortunate for those opportunities.

### **What comes to mind when you think back to your first year at Western?**

Before my first year at WIU, I had just completed my DMA coursework at Northwestern, and was an adjunct instructor at Roosevelt University. I led an exciting brass group in residence at Northwestern University's Alice Millar Chapel, but always hoped that one day I would end up teaching full time at a university.

My first year at WIU, I commuted on the weekends and spent a great deal of time in my office during the week. People would hear me practicing in the evenings and there'd be a knock on the door and students would drop by and visit. As you know, Browne Hall never sleeps, and I really enjoyed getting to know the students and establishing those connections.







The Sinfonians always had a float in the Homecoming Parade and one year, I had the pleasure of driving the pickup truck that pulled the float. That particular homecoming was a cold, blustery day for the float's Hawaiian theme, which had the brothers dressed in grass skirts. We couldn't get through the parade fast enough! Robin and I had a great time being part of the festivities and felt welcomed by the Department of Music.

The campus looked different in the 90s - the Multicultural Center building didn't exist and this period predated the retrofit construction of the COFAC Recital Hall in the Simpkins gymnasium. The Music Department alternated 3-week rehearsal and performance slots with the Theater Department in Hainline, which presented both preparation challenges and humorous moments. Once again, we're starting an exciting building project with the construction of the CPA, which will have a profound effect on our students, faculty and regional community.

### **What were some meaningful experiences for you at Western over the years?**

There were so many rewarding performances and research projects. The university supported an early recruiting project which yielded my first solo CD and featured faculty performers, faculty composers and the Wind Ensemble. Dr. Fansler asked me to perform a cornet solo when the Wind Ensemble performed at Chicago's Symphony Center and it was a remarkable experience to be at the front of that stage which carries so much history for the Chicago Symphony. I was fortunate to travel to Salvador, Brazil with the JSO and perform as a representative for WIU. The Stephenson chamber music commissions and recordings (*Devil's Tale* and *Octet*) were rewarding and brought a wider awareness and recognition of our SOM faculty performers and conductor. Collaborating with my colleague and friend, John Mindeman on a recent commission, represents an exciting capstone experience.

Beyond these events, I'm always inspired by challenging complexities that resolve into meaningful experiences for our students. Conducting Mozart's *Magic Flute* with full orchestra and opera cast, was certainly one of those high points. I'll always remember the support and kindness of my vocal area colleagues as well as our students' joy, bringing the entire project to fruition. As I reflect on these special events, it's very easy to overlook the daily excitement that takes place in the classroom or studio when a student takes a leap and learns a new technique, overcomes a challenge, or quite simply, plays a beautiful phrase. This in itself is not simple and can't be taken for granted.

### **What advice do you have for our current faculty?**

We have an exceptional faculty in the School of Music and I'm proud to be a member of that team. The pandemic truly tested our ability to change, adapt and consider new deliveries and methods of teaching. We persevered through that period but I'm sure that more challenges and changes are on the horizon. Through it all, we have to remain flexible and open to change as our students and core values change through the decades. It's imperative that we think globally about the SOM and its contributions to our students, the university and community at large.

### **What are your future plans?**

I hope to still teach and perform but at a slower pace. There are new hobbies and activities I'd like to explore. I'll continue my creative work with the Quincy Symphony Orchestra and look forward to their future programs. It's been a dream to one day move to Door County, WI and this year, we are one step closer.

# FACULTY NEWS



The Newphonia Ensemble, invited by the **WIU Music Composition** area, presented a fascinating concert on Sunday and had a Q & A session with the WIU composers during the weekly Composition Seminar.



The WIU **Woodwind** area hosted a free benefit concert at the Quad-Cities Campus on December 9, sharing compositions by Ligeti, Arnold, Canfield, Rubstov, Beach, and Mellits.

**Dr. Richard Cangro**, Director of Music Education,

presented two sessions for post graduate and undergraduate students on models of teaching and learning, and on profound music learning at the Uludag University in Bursa, Turkey in November. He also conducted two concerts with the Monmouth Civic Orchestra at Monmouth College, and for the ILMEA District 4 Festival Junior Orchestra.



Assistant Professor of Tuba **Dr. James Land** hosted a successful TubaChristmas event as part of Macomb's annual *Dickens on the Square* holiday event at the Western Illinois Museum.

Land served on faculty for the prestigious Interlochen Arts Camp (online) and Indiana University Summer Music Clinic over the summer months.



**Dr. Natalie Landowski**, Assistant Professor of Piano, was invited to present her pedagogy workshop, "Shining Light on Neglected Keyboard Masters: François Couperin and Johann Nepomuk Hummel," at the Illinois State Music Teachers Association's 2022 State Conference on November 4th at Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, IL. The following WIU MTNA collegiate chapter members joined her in attending the conference: Denzel Abarquez, Payton Anthony, Simone Baum, Ella Burton, Michael Joiner, John Paul Mendoza, Hannah Murray, Alexis Faye Pal, and Paolo Gabriel Romero.

**Dr. Jena Gardner**, Assistant Professor of Horn, received the Provost's Award for

Academic Excellence in Teaching, selected among the pool of winners from each college in the "Excellence in Teaching" category. She will be honored alongside the five Provost's Award recipients in other areas at an awards ceremony in February 2023.



**Dr. Jennifer Jones**, Director of Music Therapy, completed an 8 year term as Associate Editor for Music Therapy Perspectives (2015-2022).

**Dr. Bruce Briney** premiered **John Mindeman's** piece written for him, "Miracle Fair," with the WIU Wind Ensemble in December 2022.





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## WIU FESTIVAL OF TRUMPETS



Did you play trumpet at WIU?  
Did you sit on the Browne Hall Lobby benches,  
reflecting on your future in music?

**Join Dr. Briney and WIU trumpet alumni  
for this day of celebration!**

**March 26, 2023 | 3PM**

**RSVP: [bit.ly/wiutrumpet](https://bit.ly/wiutrumpet)**





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